

Committee Attendance: Mark Berman, Jay Boyar, Yen-Ju Chen, David Friedman, Bing Kung, Grant Moy, Suzanne Weiss, Noreene Wells and Ben Wu.

Absent: Kelly Cameron, Kernan Chaisson, Nat Finklestein, and Gabriel Nmah.

County Staff: Steve Emanuel, Dr. Costis Toregas, Andrea Gardner, Donna Keating, Keith Watkins and Amy Wilson.

PEG Representative/s: Dick Lipsky, Melissa Pace and Richard Turner

**1. Call to Order/Approval of Agenda, Introductions**

- The meeting was to order at 7:05pm with introductions and a moment of silence in remembrance of Jane Lawton's last CCAC meeting a year ago. A motion to approve the content of the October meeting minutes was made by Jay and passed unanimously. Suzanne thanked the members of the committee who responded to her question concerning the version of the minutes they preferred. She also stated that she would repeat the question and added that a decision regarding the format did not have to be made at this meeting. Mark asked what would be easier for the Cable Office.
- Suzanne asked that the June minutes previously approved be amended to correct the meeting date. The motion passed unanimously. Suzanne asked for a motion to approve the meeting schedule for 2009 to include the fourth Wednesday in July and August, July 22 and August 26, since the committee votes each year whether they can recess for the summer. Andrea confirmed that the meeting space has been reserved.

**2. Staff Reports, Budget and Questions**

**Cable Office:** *Amy Wilson, Acting Manager, Administration and Franchising Services*

- Amy announced that tomorrow would be her last day in the Cable Office. She will be moving on to the (OMB) Office of Management & Budget. There is no written report. The Cable Office had a meeting this week with the County Executive and Comcast representatives to discuss reporting requirements to tie in directly with the "score card" the Cable Office is formulating for use in the quarterly reporting of customer service to Council. The budget is due to OMB by Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup> and is almost complete. Amy will continue working on the Cable budget. There is a session with County Council MFP Committee scheduled for Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup> on the Cable Fund, the Fund Use Policies and the DTS strategic plan.
- Suzanne inquired as to when the committee could review the score card. The MFP committee has asked that the CCAC have the opportunity to preview and provide input on the score card. Amy responded that it is still a work in progress not yet a public document. The committee would only then be able to review it.
- Al Carr the government representative to the county from Verizon is leaving. No names have been given to us yet for a replacement.
- Suzanne wished Amy well on behalf of the committee. Steve brought a cake for all to share in Amy's new venture.

*Keith Watkins, Investigator*

- Keith provided the committee with an update on the interviews recently conducted. The information was sent back to the County Executive's office and final approval may be completed on December 9<sup>th</sup>. Keith noted that he had recently sent a complaint report to the committee. Keith also brought it to the attention of the committee that this was Yen-Ju Chen's last meeting and presented her with a certificate signed by the County Executive, and a celebratory cake.

*Donna Keating, Program Manager*

- Donna presented the committee with a brief narrative regarding the budget for the Government Access Channel. Their request is to continue funding which provides programming for the legislative and the executive branches, channel management, engineering for the technical operations center, the ability to keep abreast of current and future technology. This also includes a request for a new position which will be submitted for approval.

**PEG Network:** *Dick Lipsky, Supervisor, Instructional Television, Montgomery County Public Schools Instructional Television (MCPS)*

- Dick thanked the committee for its involvement and support of the PEG network. He distributed and reviewed with the committee a copy of the PEG Network FY10-15 Strategic Plan in addition to highlighting the areas where they need the most help. See attached supporting documentation.
- David inquired as to why the PEGs the requested \$1.3million and what percentage of this is represented as a whole. Richard indicated it was less than 10 percent. Suzanne thanked Dick and asked that as the committee puts together their letter and testimony of support, what would be some key highlights point that would make a difference in terms of what the PEGS are looking for. Dick responded that the PEGS would like to continue to receive the same level of support. Equipment replacement is definitely a concern and have requested a slight increase on the completion list. With the approaching digital conversion, equipment replacement is a very important part of this request, in addition to mobile production vehicle emergency equipment.
- Bing asked about the significant jump for network engineering and promotion for the PEGS from FY08 to FY09. Richard responded the jump occurred due to the launching of the mobile production vehicle in the prior year. They were utilizing part time engineering staff to support the vehicle. County Cable Montgomery has filled the position for a full time engineer who will now support the vehicle. On promotion, Richard responded it was a commitment to raise awareness; the recent the viewer survey revealed that many individuals are aware of services but not consuming, and there are more who could be made aware of the benefits of the cable programming. Bing asked if there were a plan in place and Richard responded the plan was in place for FY08 but activities and ability to spend were not up to par.

*Dick Lipsky, Supervisor, MCPS Instructional Television*

- Dick presented the budget for MCPS which includes a request for slight increase. He also provided justification for this increase in addition to some of the challenges they are currently facing. Instructional TV has broadened the number and type of programs it offers, and includes captioning and a number of languages.

*Richard Turner, Executive Director, Montgomery Community Television (MCT)*

- Richard presented a same dollar budget for FY10, initiatives for FY10 and highlighted accomplishments made by Montgomery Community Television. Mark asked how these increases going to occur with a flat budget. Richard responded the increased utilization of the mobile production van and production will be accomplished with the use of volunteers.

*Melissa Pace, Manager Instructional Television, Montgomery College*

- Melissa provided the committee with an overview of the budget for Montgomery College with request for a 9% increase of which 8.3% of that increase is due to merit and salary increases which is negotiated by the union. She also distributed copies of their FY10 Cable Plan Budget Request.

3. **Unfinished Business and Committee Reports**

- Suzanne asked for an update on the digital transition. Donna responded that Montgomery County is ahead, including revisions to the County website making it larger, more visual and appealing. A video from the FCC has been added and a link on how to set up a converter box and the converter box with a VCR. The Cable Office is also attending more community events to address this issue, along with working with the Office of Consumer Protection, and working the target population such as Meals on Wheels, Asberry Village, and Leisure World. Discussions are also being held for a contingency plan for the Cable Office. to provide information in the executive office building, council office building, auditoriums and cafeteria during the month of December. Speaking with PEG partners about possibly sponsoring a day to make phone calls. Some of the biggest issues are the setting up of the boxes, receiving coupons and issues related to the purchasing of boxes. Suzanne asked if there was anything being done in schools. Dick responded that MCPS has not done much, but it could certainly be added as a communication tool. Donna and Dick will work together to disseminate information through the schools. Over 90% of the televisions in use in the schools are analog; the cable companies assure MCPS that they will be running an analog signal for the next three years.

4. **New Business**

- Suzanne thanked the PEGs for their budget presentations and asked that as a committee a letter be put together in support of the PEGs. Amy indicated that the budget will be submitted to OMB on Dec 4<sup>th</sup> and be finalized by March 15. Amy suggested that any letter from the committee in support of the PEGS be sent to the County Executive in early January. She also suggested a similar letter be sent to the County Council in mid April. Dr. Toregas asked the committee to consider the idea that television could be used as a resource for Montgomery County residents. In difficult times, this could make the argument for programming and their budget much more eloquent. He also suggested that during these tough economic times the committee could serve as a resource.
- Suzanne stated she haven't yet been advised of a date for the annual meeting with the County Executive and reminded members of her previous request to put together a list of committee's goals and accomplishments. Committee elections are scheduled to take place at the next meeting, interested committee members should submit their names and resume to share.
- Suzanne inquired about the status of the recruitment for the Cable Administrator .Steve Emanuel responded their were several qualified candidates interviewed and selection has not been made. He will be able to provide more information at the next committee meeting.

5. **Public Comments**

None presented.

- 6.. **Adjourn** Suzanne thanked Steve Emanuel and Dr. Costis Toregas for their support. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm. Next committee meeting and annual dinner is scheduled for Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 7pm in COB Cafeteria